

Chapter 1



General Overview

Arizona Early Intervention Program

Table of Contents

<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
1.0.0 General Overview	2
1.1.0 Structural Overview	2
1.2.0 Interagency Coordinating Council	4
1.3.0 Information About Public Participation	6
1.4.0 General Supervision	6
1.5.0 Public Awareness and Child Find	7
1.6.0 Central Directory	10

1.0.0 General Overview

1.0.1 Authority: 20 U.S.C §§1476, et seq.; 34 CFR §§303, et seq.; A.R.S. §8-651

1.0.2 Introduction Policy

1. It is the policy of the state of Arizona to continuously develop and implement a statewide, comprehensive, coordinated, interagency, multidisciplinary system for providing early intervention services to all children who are eligible under IDEA, Part C, and their families, including Native American infants and toddlers with disabilities, and their families who reside on a reservation geographically located in the state. This policy, stated in Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.) §8-652 and an intergovernmental agreement among the five participating agencies, incorporates all of the components of the statewide system that are required under IDEA, Part C.
2. Under A.R.S. §8-652, the Governor of Arizona designated the Department of Economic Security (DES) as the Lead Agency for the state's Part C system to be responsible for the administration of that system. Within the Department, the Director of DES designated the office of the Arizona Early Intervention Program (DES/AzEIP) to carry out the functions and activities of administering the system, including the administration of funds under this part, identification and coordination of resources available to the state from federal, state and local sources, and the assignment of financial responsibility among appropriate agencies. Funds received under IDEA, Part C will be used to assist the state to maintain and implement the statewide system.
3. It is the mission of the Arizona Early Intervention Program to enhance the capacity of families to support their infants and toddlers with delays or disabilities to thrive in their homes and communities.
4. The Executive Director of DES/AzEIP is responsible for managing, supervising, and monitoring the following functions and activities:
 - A. monitoring the AzEIP Service Providing Agencies, institutions, and organizations used by the state to fulfill its obligations under Part C of IDEA and its regulations;
 - B. enforcing obligations imposed on those agencies, institutions, and organizations under Part C of IDEA and its regulations;
 - C. providing technical assistance as necessary to those agencies, institutions, and organizations; and
 - D. correcting deficiencies that are identified through monitoring activities.
5. DES/AzEIP is committed to developing and utilizing a system that results in effective general supervision of the early intervention program and ensures that infants and toddlers and their families have available quality early intervention supports and services provided within the context of a family's daily activities and routines.

1.2.0 Structural Overview

1.2.1 Policy

1.2.2 AzEIP Participating Agencies

1. DES/AzEIP administers the early intervention system in collaboration and agreement with the following AzEIP Participating Agencies:
 - A. Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES);
 - B. Arizona Department of Education (ADE);
 - C. Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS);
 - D. Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS); and the
 - E. Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (ASDB).

1.2.3 AzEIP Service Providing Agencies

1. AzEIP Service Providing Agencies are those state agencies in A.R.S. §8-652 that provide service coordination and other early intervention supports and services according to IDEA, Part C, relevant federal and state law, and AzEIP policies and procedures.
2. The AzEIP Service Providing Agencies are the following state agencies and each of their employees and contractors providing early intervention supports and services:
 - A. Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind;
 - B. DES/Division of Developmental Disabilities, and
 - C. DES/AzEIP.
3. Each AzEIP Service Providing Agency ensures that AzEIP policies and procedures are incorporated into its agency policies and procedures. Agencies monitor employee and contractor adherence to policies and procedures and report findings and corrective actions to DES/AzEIP.
4. DES/AzEIP provides technical assistance and independent review to support consistent and constructive monitoring across agencies.
5. DES/AzEIP addresses specific agency, contract, and/or employee performance with the appropriate agency or contractor individually. The two entities determine a mutually acceptable corrective action, including timelines, resources, and responsible parties. In the event that the two entities cannot agree on corrective actions, DES/AzEIP will establish steps to ensure conformity to AzEIP policies and procedures and the process for monitoring change. See *General Supervision*, Chapter 2.
6. All AzEIP Service Providing Agencies serve all racial and ethnic groups within the state.
7. All Service Providing Agencies provide services throughout the state, thus providing access for all cultural groups in urban and rural locations, including Native Americans living on reservations geographically located in the state.

1.2.4 Interagency Agreements

1. DES/AzEIP is responsible for ensuring that interagency agreements are maintained between and among the AzEIP Participating Agencies involved in AzEIP. Each agreement must:

- A. ensure effective cooperation and coordination between and among all agencies involved in AzEIP;
 - B. define the financial responsibility for the early intervention services delineated in each agreement; and
 - C. include all procedures for resolving intra-agency and interagency disputes.
2. Procedures for resolving disputes must allow the AzEIP Participating Agencies to resolve their own internal disputes in a timely manner. If a participating agency is unable to resolve its own internal dispute within 15 days, then it must submit a written request to the Executive Director of DES/AzEIP. The Executive Director of DES/AzEIP or designee will review all the relevant information in the dispute by:
 - A. conducting an independent on-site investigation, if necessary; and
 - B. giving all parties involved in the dispute the opportunity to submit additional information, either orally or in writing.
3. The Executive Director of DES/AzEIP or designee will make an independent determination as to the resolution within 30 days of the receipt of the request and send the written decision to all parties.
4. Decisions in intra-agency and interagency disputes are binding. If necessary, to ensure compliance with its actions and findings in the resolution of a dispute, DES/AzEIP will refer the dispute to the Office of the Governor.
5. During a dispute, DES/AzEIP is responsible for assigning financial responsibility to the appropriate agency, dependent upon the facts and nature of the situation. If, during the course of the resolution of the dispute, it is determined that the assignment of financial responsibility was inappropriately made, then DES/AzEIP shall reassign financial responsibility to the appropriate agency and make arrangements for reimbursement of any expenditures incurred by the agency originally assigned financial responsibility.
6. DES/AzEIP shall make arrangements to ensure that services are provided to children who are eligible for AzEIP and their families in a timely manner, pending the resolution of disputes between and among agencies by assigning financial responsibility to an AzEIP Participating Agency, subject to the provisions of the interagency agreement or paying for the delivered services as the “payor of last resort.” A copy of the Interagency Agreement between the five AzEIP Participating Agencies can be found at www.azdes.gov/azeip or by contacting the DES/AzEIP office.

1.3.0 Interagency Coordinating Council

1.3.1 Authority: 20 U.S.C. §1441; 34 C.F.R. §§303.600 603; A.R.S. §8-651

1.3.2 Policy

1. Under A.R.S. §8-652, the ICC has been appointed by the Governor as required by federal law to include parents, providers, state agency representatives, a personnel preparation professional and others. The Governor has appointed a Chair and Vice

Chair who are not representatives of DES/AzEIP or an AzEIP Participating Agency.

2. The membership of the Council shall consist of the following:
 - A. At least 20 percent of the members are parents of infants or toddlers with disabilities or children with disabilities aged 12 or younger, with knowledge of, or experience with, programs for infants and toddlers with disabilities. One parent member has a child with a disability under six years of age.
 - B. At least 20 percent of the members are public or private providers of early intervention services.
 - C. There is at least one member from each of the state agencies involved in the provision of or payment for early intervention services. These agencies include the Department of Economic Security/Division for Developmental Disabilities, the Department of Health Services, the Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind, and the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System. The agencies' representatives have sufficient authority to engage in policy planning and implementation on behalf of their agencies.
 - D. At least one member is from the Arizona Department of Education, which is responsible for preschool services to children with disabilities. The ADE representative has sufficient authority to engage in policy planning and implementation on its behalf.
 - E. At least one member from the state Medicaid agency, the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System.
 - E. At least one member is from the state Legislature.
 - F. At least one member is involved in the preparation of personnel to work in early intervention.
 - G. At least one member is from the Arizona Department of Insurance, which is the state agency responsible for the state regulation of health insurance.
 - H. At least one representative from a Head Start agency or program in the state.
 - I. At least one member from the Department of Economic Security/Child Care Administration.
 - J. At least one member from the Office of the coordinator of education of homeless children and youth.
 - K. At least one member who is a state foster care representative from the state child welfare agency responsible for foster care, DES, Division of Children, Youth and Families.
 - M. At least one member from the state agency responsible for children's mental health, the Arizona Department of Health Services.
3. Council members are chosen to provide the widest possible geographic, racial, and ethnic representation so that the needs of children throughout the state may be properly heard and addressed.
4. The Council has established three standing committees - Executive, Structure and Flow, and Collaboration and Education. Ad hoc committees are formed as needed to address specific issues, which do not fall under the purview of one of the standing committees.

5. Each Committee of the ICC will review proposed policy, procedures, materials and strategies within their areas of focus and make recommendations to the full Council. The Council will consider and deliberate (1) the proposed action by DES/AzEIP on behalf of AzEIP and (2) Committee recommendations before voting to forward specific recommendations to DES/AzEIP.
6. Members of the ICC may be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary expenses for attending Council meetings and performing Council duties. This includes reimbursement to family members for their time and travel. A member may also be compensated if that member is not employed or must forfeit wages from other employment when performing official ICC business. Otherwise, Council members serve without compensation from funds available under the Act.
7. Meetings are held every other month. Members are encouraged to attend and participate fully. Meeting announcements are publicized in advance. All meetings are held in facilities that are open and accessible to members and the public. If necessary, interpretation for the deaf and other special services are provided for Council members and participants.
8. No member of the Council may cast a vote on any matter that would provide direct financial benefit to that member or otherwise give the appearance of a conflict of interest. A "Council Member Conflict of Interest Statement" for each member is on file in the DES/AzEIP office.

1.4.0 Information About Public Participation

1.4.1 Policy

1. Prior to the adoption of any policy necessary to meet the requirements of Part C, DES/AzEIP and the AzEIP Participating Agencies, with assistance from the ICC, solicit public comment for a minimum of sixty (60) days.
2. During the public comment period, the general public, including individuals with disabilities and parents of infants or toddlers with disabilities, may submit comments by fax, letter or e-mail to DES/AzEIP or during public hearings, which are publicized with the original posting of the proposed policy. Procedures for submitting public comment are outlined in public comment announcements.
3. DES/AzEIP distributes proposed policy and/or information about accessing proposed policy statewide via e-mail, posting on its website, and/or at meeting presentations to the AzEIP Participating Agencies, the ICC and its committees, early intervention contractors, and families, as appropriate. The AzEIP Participating Agencies distribute information to their employees, contractors and families via agency mechanisms for communication. The ICC and its committees, DES/AzEIP, and the AzEIP Participating Agency employees and contractors are encouraged to inform as broad a range of contacts as possible.
4. AzEIP policies not specifically developed to meet the requirements of Part C are not subject to public participation requirements. Clarification of existing policies is not subject to public participation requirements.

1.5.0 General Supervision

1.5.1 Authority: 20 U.S.C. §1435; 34 C.F.R. §§303.160-176

1.5.2 Policy

1. DES/AzEIP is responsible for the general administration of the Arizona Early Intervention Program, which includes the following:
 - A. general administration and supervision of the programs and activities receiving funding under Part C; and
 - B. oversight and monitoring of programs and activities used by Arizona to carry out early intervention, whether or not these programs or activities are receiving Part C funding, to ensure that Arizona complies with all federal requirements.
2. AzEIP's general supervision includes the implementation and monitoring of the following systems, which are set out in separate sections/chapters of AzEIP policies and procedures:
 - A. Child Find and Public Awareness System
 - B. Comprehensive System of Professional Development
 - C. General Supervision
 - D. Technical Assistance System
 - E. Data Collection and Record Keeping
 - F. Financial Matters

1.6.0 Public Awareness and Child Find System

1.6.1 Authority: 20 U.S.C. §1435; 34 C.F.R. §§320 and 321

1.6.2 Public Awareness Policy

1. DES/AzEIP administers Part C funds, assigns financial responsibility among appropriate agencies, and ensures that resources are made available under this Part for all geographic areas within the state.
2. DES/AzEIP and the AzEIP Participating Agencies work with community partners to ensure that:
 - A. public awareness and child find activities are culturally and linguistically appropriate, ongoing, and designed to identify all potentially eligible children residing throughout the state; and
 - B. all areas of the state are well represented in all aspects of AzEIP planning and implementation.
3. DES/AzEIP and the AzEIP Participating Agencies develop partnerships with the Native American tribal communities in planning public awareness and child find activities on the reservations, of which there are 21 in the state.
4. All the AzEIP Service Providing Agencies have served, and will continue to serve, all racial and ethnic groups within the state. These agencies provide services throughout the state, thus providing access for all cultural groups in urban and rural

locations, including Native Americans living on reservations geographically located in the state.

5. AzEIP public awareness materials and public meeting agendas include the statement to encourage people with disabilities or special needs to request appropriate accommodations to ensure their active participation on all committees, conferences, public hearings, and meetings. Facilities used for meetings must meet the accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
6. DES/AzEIP coordinates with the AzEIP Participating Agencies and community and state partners to ensure that a statewide public awareness system that focuses on the early identification of children who are eligible to receive early intervention services under this part is developed, implemented, and maintained. The public awareness system includes the preparation and dissemination of materials for parents on the availability of early intervention services to all primary referral sources, especially hospitals and physicians.
7. DES/AzEIP and the AzEIP Participating Agencies promote public awareness and understanding of the Arizona Early Intervention Program through:
 - A. interagency planning and dissemination of public awareness materials;
 - B. provision of training and technical assistance; and
 - C. the development of partnerships within the early child care and education, health and human service systems, and the business communities. Public awareness is a continuous, ongoing effort that is in effect throughout the state, including rural areas.
8. Public awareness materials describe:
 - A. AzEIP procedures for referral to determine whether a child is suspected of having a developmental delay or disability and needing an evaluation and assessment; and
 - B. the provision of early intervention services.
9. Primary referral sources include:
 - A. parents/families;
 - B. hospitals, including prenatal and postnatal care facilities;
 - C. physicians;
 - D. child care programs;
 - E. local educational agencies (LEAs);
 - F. public health facilities;
 - G. other social service agencies; and
 - H. other health care providers.
10. DES/AzEIP ensures the dissemination of materials to primary referral sources, such as physicians' offices, hospitals, child care and education programs, and other sources as indicated in the AzEIP public awareness plan. AzEIP Participating Agencies engage in public awareness activities, including the

dissemination of materials, within their agencies and through existing outreach mechanisms.

11. DES/AzEIP and appropriate AzEIP Participating Agency personnel and contractors develop public awareness materials, including presentations, brochures, and other media, which consistently describe:
 - A. the purpose and availability of early intervention services;
 - B. the process for making referrals;
 - C. criteria for eligibility; and
 - D. the obligation to ensure that referrals are made no more than two working days after a professional has identified a potentially eligible child.
12. DES/AzEIP and AzEIP Participating Agencies facilitate local public awareness and child find efforts by ensuring the distribution of public awareness materials, physician referral forms and other information as appropriate, to physicians, hospitals, public health nurses, social service organizations, Head Start, child care centers, WIC offices, immunization clinics, faith-based organizations, tribal early childhood programs and other referral sources.
13. DES/AzEIP tracks the dissemination of AzEIP materials by primary referral sources, recording the total number of brochures, and other materials provided to each primary referral source. It also reviews tracking data and modifies strategies as necessary.
14. DES/AzEIP and/or their contractors provide technical assistance to targeted medical, education, human service, and child care programs. The AzEIP Participating Agencies provide technical assistance within their agencies and for state and community partners, as appropriate. Training and technical assistance includes information about AzEIP and its public awareness plan.
15. DES/AzEIP and the AzEIP Participating Agencies identify potential community partners and facilitate the development of local partnerships to understand the role and scope of the early intervention system and participate on relevant planning and/or advisory committees.

1.6.3 Child Find Policy

1. DES/AzEIP, in coordination with AzEIP Participating Agencies, implements a child find system to identify, locate, and, if suspected of having a developmental disability, evaluate infants and toddlers in Arizona who are eligible for early intervention services.
2. DES/AzEIP, in collaboration with the AzEIP Participating Agencies and the Interagency Coordinating Council, ensures that the child find system for infants and toddlers is coordinated with all other major efforts to locate and identify children conducted by:
 - A. other state agencies responsible for implementing the various education, health, and social service programs relevant to AzEIP;

- B. tribes and tribal organizations that receive payments under Part C other tribes and tribal organizations as appropriate; and
 - C. efforts with other programs, such as Part B, and as required by federal law.
3. DES/AzEIP, as Lead Agency, with the advice and assistance of the ICC, ensures that there will not be unnecessary duplication of effort by the agencies involved in the Part C Child Find system. The resources of each public agency will be utilized to implement the Child Find system in the most efficient manner.
 4. DES/AzEIP, through its agency partners and the AzEIP Team-based model contractors, regardless of agency affiliation or funding source, track and report the sources of all referrals by type/category and quantity to their respective agencies at least annually. Data on referrals are entered into a database and sent to DES/AzEIP at least monthly.
 5. DES/AzEIP, the AzEIP Participating Agencies and their contractors, as appropriate, facilitate the identification, location and evaluation of all potentially eligible children through interagency planning, participating in the public awareness system, screening and referral, and monitoring.
 6. AzEIP Child Find activities are reviewed annually by DES/AzEIP and its agency partners to ensure that there is not unnecessary duplication of effort by the various agencies involved in the AzEIP Child Find system. The AzEIP Participating Agencies, ICC, and other community partners identify and recruit potential Child Find partners at the state and local levels respectively.
 7. Each AzEIP Participating Agency ensures that all AzEIP procedures for referral, evaluation and assessment and provision of services, as appropriate, are incorporated into agency policies and procedures and that personnel and employee adherence to these requirements is monitored.
 8. DES/AzEIP, AzEIP Participating Agencies, and relevant contractors participate in the development and distribution of AzEIP public awareness materials to ensure that primary referral sources are informed about AzEIP procedures for referral of children to AzEIP, including their responsibility to refer a child no more than two (2) working days after a child has been identified as potentially eligible.
 9. The AzEIP Service Providing Agencies implement the requirements of the Child Find IGA between the Arizona Department of Economic Security and the Arizona Department of Education when referrals are received for children who may be potentially eligible for IDEA, Part B. See AzEIP Policies and Procedures, Chapter 3, *Early Intervention Services*.

1.7.0 Central Directory

1.7.1 Policy

1. DES/AzEIP ensures that Arizona has developed a Central Directory of information, which is operational and includes the following information:
 - A. public and private early intervention services, resources and experts available within the state;

- B. research and demonstration projects being conducted in the state;
 - C. professional and other groups, nationally and locally, that provide assistance to infants and toddlers with special needs, and their families.
2. The Central Directory of information provides sufficient detail to:
- A. ensure that the general public will be able to determine the nature and scope of the services and assistance available from each of the sources listed in the directory; and
 - B. enable the parent of an eligible child to contact, by telephone or letter, any of the sources listed in the directory.
3. The Central Directory shall be:
- A. updated at least annually, through coordination with other information and referral systems;
 - B. available in each geographic region, including rural areas upon request and on the DES/AzEIP website; and
 - C. available in places and in a manner which is accessible to persons with disabilities.